

REMARKS

The following remarks are fully and completely responsive to the Office Action dated April 23, 2003. Claims 28-42[✓] and 46 are pending in this application. In the outstanding Office Action, the drawings were objected to; the abstract was objected to; the title was objected to; claim 46 was objected to; claim 35 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; claims 28-32, 34, 37, 38, 40 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b); and claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 36, 39, 42 and 46 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 35 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. No new matter has been added. Claims 28-42 and 46 are presented for reconsideration.

Drawing Objections

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) because they failed to show the contact surface 219 recited at page 8, line 23. Applicants have amended the specification to change "219" to "214". Reference numeral 214 is illustrated in Figure 4A. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection to the drawings.

The drawings were also objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) because they fail to show support surface 304c as recited at page 7, lines 14-15. The enclosed replacement drawing containing Figures 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B and 5C contains an amendment to Fig. 5C, changing reference numeral 304 to reference numeral 304c.

Accordingly, the drawings now show support surface 304c. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection to the drawings.

Specification Objections

The abstract of the disclosure was objected to because the abstract exceeded 150 words in length. The attached substitute Abstract is less than 150 words in length. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the abstract.

The first paragraph of the disclosure was objected to because it failed to reference U.S. Patent No. 6,290,550. Applicants' amendment to the specification now makes reference to this patent. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection to the specification.

The title of the invention was objected to as not being descriptive. Applicants' have amended the title as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the title.

Claim 46 was objected to due to formal reasons. Applicants have amended claim 46 to correct these formal matters. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claim 46.

35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 35 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. The Office Action asserted that the statement

"located outside said main body" was vague and indefinite since it was unclear what was located outside the main body. Applicants have amended claim 35 to recite that "said exterior contact portion is located outside said main body". Accordingly, claim 35 now particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention since Applicants have clearly specified what is located outside the main body. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 28-32, 34, 37, 38, 40 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bruetsch (U.S. Patent No. 3,548,367). In making this rejection, the Office Action asserts that this reference teaches each and every element of the claimed invention.

Claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bruetsch in view of Matthews (U.S. Patent No. 5,575,691). In making this rejection, the Office Action asserts that the combination of these two references teaches and/or suggests each and every element of the claimed invention. The Office Action also asserts that it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine these two references.

Claim 28 recites a method of making a same potential block. This method includes stamping a first metal piece from a first sheet of metal, the first metal piece including a first carrier strip and a plurality of first clips extending from the first carrier

strip. The method also includes inserting the plurality of first clips into a plurality of holes of a main body of the same potential block.

Bruetsch teaches rolling a flat sheet to form the generally cylindrical configuration of the multiple connector strip shown in Fig. 1.

"The multiple connector strip is formed from a flat sheet. In particular, a flat sheet may be cut along specified lines and rolled to form the generally cylindrical configuration of the multiple connector strip."
(emphasis added)

Column 3, lines 26-30.

In contrast, Applicants' claims clearly recite stamping a first metal piece. A metal-forming process that utilizes rolling uses different equipment and procedures than a metal-forming process using stamping. Since different equipment is used, the rolling process taught in Bruetsch is not the same as, or equivalent to, the stamping process recited in the present claims.

It appears that Matthews teaches an insertion and extraction tool that is used to remove a pin. Matthews, however, fails to correct the deficiency discussed above in Bruetsch.

Accordingly, neither Bruetsch nor the combination of Bruetsch and Matthews teaches and/or suggests the claimed invention. Specifically, neither reference teaches and/or suggests stamping a first metal piece from a first sheet of metal, said first metal piece including a first carrier strip and a plurality of first clips extending from said first carrier strip. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal

of the rejection of claims 28-32, 34, 37, 38, 40 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and the rejection of claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 35, 36, 39, 42 and 46 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. These claims have been amended to place them in independent form and include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 35, 36, 39, 42 and 46.

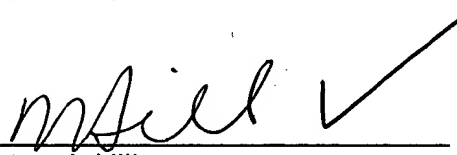
Conclusion

Applicants' amendments and remarks have overcome the objections and rejections set forth in the Office Action dated April 23, 2003. Specifically, Applicants' remarks and amendment to Figure 5C overcome the objection to the drawings. Applicants' replacement abstract, title amendment, and amendment to the specification and claim 46 overcome the objections to the specification. Applicants' amendment of claim 35 overcomes the rejection of this claim under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants' remarks have distinguished claims 28-32, 34, 37, 38, 40 and 41 from Bruetsch and have distinguished claim 33 from the combination of Bruetsch and Matthews overcoming the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a). Applicants have amended claims 35, 36, 39, 42 and 46 to place these claims in independent form. Accordingly, claims 28-42 and 46 are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request consideration and allowance of claims 28-42 and 46.

Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney by telephone if it is believed that such contact will expedite the prosecution of the application.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge payment for any additional fees which may be required with respect to this paper to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **making reference to attorney docket number 108324-00001.**

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosures: Substitute Abstract
Drawing
Petition for Extension of Time

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